

*Quarterly*  
**NEWS**  
*Letter*

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THE LURE OF CALIFORNIANA

By Lawrence Clark Powell

HOW PRINTING CAME TO THE ASTOR SCHOOL

By John Ayling


SERENDIPITY

NOTES ON PUBLICATIONS :: EXHIBITIONS

ELECTED TO MEMBERSHIP

£c. £c.

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# Quarterly NEWS Letter

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## THE LURE OF CALIFORNIANA

By LAWRENCE CLARK POWELL\*

I LOOKED up "lure" in the dictionary. It comes from the Old High German "luodor," meaning "bait." Synonyms are *entice*, *inveigle*, *decoy*, *beguile*, *tempt*, and *seduce*. All of these apply to my life as a Californiac. I have indeed been lured, enticed, inveigled, decoyed, beguiled, tempted, and seduced—all by books.

My bibliothecal, bibliographical, bibliomaniacal bias for Californiana is no secret. I have been reading, writing about, collecting, and talking about Californiana most of my life, and especially since an absence of three years from California, thirty-five years ago, enabled me to get the state into focus and perspective.

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\*This was the opening lecture in the series on Californiana given this June under the sponsorship of the University of California School of Librarianship and Continuing Education in Librarianship, University Extension, Berkeley. It is printed here by permission of the author and the editor of *California Librarian*, where it also appears.



## The Book Club of California

Seen from Europe, California appeared as through the wrong end of the telescope—tiny and far away, and cameo-clear.

I shall confine myself to only two aspects of this alluring subject of Californiana: landscape and literature. These are the two things that have come to have the strongest pull on me. Not history, not biography, or memoirs, or travel, or bibliography. No. The two L's, landscape and literature. Books that combine the beauty of the land with the beauty of the language. Books in which the thing described and the language of description are in perfect register, one overlying the other, so that there is no blur. Books in which the transparent language of literature affords the reader a clear look at landscape and life.

I shall proceed topographically, from seacoast to valleys, mountains, and desert; and finally to what will eat us all in the end, cities.

First, the seacoast of California. Unless you have seen it from the sea, you haven't really seen it. That is as dramatic a sight as is the Sierra Nevada from the Owens Valley. California rears up out of the ocean like the great mountain range that it is. And the time to see it is in spring, when the seaward slopes are green and gold with new grass and mustard.

I used to see the coast at day's end, the last golden light on the peaks, when I was working on the S.S. *Yale*, and at sundown we were somewhere off the Santa Lucias, picking up the light on Piedras Blancas, due the next morning in San Pedro.

Or once on a long flight from Eureka to Los Angeles, high in the air, not far offshore, I watched Jeffers' *Continent's End* unroll like an epic poem.

The first description of the coast was Cabrillo's in 1542. "All the coast passed this day is very bold; there is a great swell and the land is very high. There are mountains which seem to reach the heavens, and the seas beat on them; sailing along close to land, it appears as though they would fall on the ships."

I own a book of Californiana, published in 1942, just four hundred years after Cabrillo's voyage; and on page 101 appears this description of the same stretch of coast described by the Portuguese voyager:

"From Arroyo San Carpofaro northward to the Sur River, about 41 miles, the coast is very bold and rugged. The cliffs are

## Quarterly News-Letter

200 to 500 feet high and the land rises rapidly to elevation of 2,500 to 3,500 feet within 2 to 3 miles of the coast."

This is from the *Coast Pilot*, published by the Coast and Geodetic Survey, a reference book of dead-pan government prose.

Cabrillo's poetical words were expanded three hundred years later by a young Yankee sailor in the greatest of all books of coastal Californiana, Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*.

This book illustrates the unpredictability of literature. No one would have picked the twenty-year-old Dana as the future writer of a masterpiece of descriptive and narrative prose, a book which has been continuously in print since it was first published in 1841. All he did was to keep a journal and then to write it up; but he had what it takes: the God-given Three S's: the power to see, to sense, and to say.

I could spend a long while reading from *Two Years Before the Mast* to illustrate Dana's powers of vision, of feeling, and of description, but I shall read only a single passage, telling of his first landing on the coast of California, at Santa Barbara. Nothing has changed. This is still the way to beach a small boat, the only hazard being the mob of surfers.

"I shall never forget the impression which our first landing on the beach of California made upon me. The sun had just gone down; it was getting dusky; the damp night wind was beginning to blow, and the heavy swell of the Pacific was setting in, and breaking in loud and high "combers" upon the beach. We lay on our oars in the swell, just outside of the surf, waiting for a good chance to run in, when a boat, which had put off from the Ayacucho just after us, came alongside of us, with a crew of dusky Sandwich Islanders, talking and hallooing in their outlandish tongue. They knew that we were novices in this kind of boating, and waited to see us go in. The second mate, however, who steered our boat, determined to have the advantage of their experience, and would not go in first. Finding at length how matters stood, they gave a shout, and taking advantage of a great comber which came swelling in, rearing its head, and



## The Book Club of California

*lifting up the stern of our boat, nearly perpendicular, and again dropping it in the trough, they gave three or four long and strong pulls, and went in on top of the great wave, throwing their oars overboard and as far from the boat as they could throw them, and jumping out the instant that the boat touched the beach, and then seizing hold of her, and running her up high and dry upon the sand. We saw at once how it was to be done, and also the necessity of keeping the boat stern on to the sea; for the instant the sea should strike upon her broadside or quarter she would be driven up broadside on and capsized. We pulled strongly in, and as soon as we felt that the sea had got hold of us, and was carrying us in with the speed of a racehorse, we threw the oars as far from the boat as we could, and took hold of the gunwale, ready to spring out and seize her when she struck, the officer using his utmost strength to keep her stern on. We were shot up upon the beach like an arrow from a bow, and seizing the boat, ran her up high and dry, and soon picked up our oars, and stood by her, ready for the captain to come down."*

As Dana is the prose master of the coast, so is Jeffers the poet laureate. In him the Lord gave us a poet to match our coast. In the power and beauty of his vision, and in the noble clarity of his language, Robinson Jeffers is our supreme poetic spokesman.

*"This mountain sea-coast is real,  
For it reaches out far into past and future;  
It is part of the great and timeless excellence of things.  
A few lean cows drift high up the bronze hill;  
The heavy-necked plow-team furrows the foreland, gulls tread the  
furrow;  
Time ebbs and flows but the rock remains."*

A quieter view of the coast is that of my third favorite coastal writer. J. Smeaton Chase was an Englishman who married

## Quarterly News-Letter

landscape and literature in several books of Californiana. His *California Coast Trails* appeared in 1913, and unfortunately has never been reprinted. It is the narrative of a horseback ride up coast from Mexico to Oregon, illustrated from photographs taken by the author. It is a leisurely book about a vanished way of life and a vanishing landscape.

Here is a Chase vignette of the same stretch of coast described by Cabrillo, the *Coast Pilot*, and Jeffers, this time seen from landward:

*"That morning's trail was the most delightful I had experienced on the trip, winding down the forested mountain-side among yellow-pines, oaks and madroños. The ground was all ashy rose with the fallen leaves of the last-named trees, and was like one of those wonderful old Persian rugs. Across the cañons the mountains rose in steep slopes of faded gold, laced here and there with dark files of timber; and beyond, the distant back ranges receded in varying tones of blue. The fog was slowly drawing out to sea, and suddenly, as if a curtain were partly lifted, I could look beneath the sheet of dazzling cloud and see the crinkled water a thousand feet below, leaden in the shadow of dense vapor. A short distance upcoast Cape San Martin stood sharply out, a line of surf marking where the great shoulder of mountain plunged into the ocean."*

Every California librarian should be knowledgeable about the geography, geology, and landscape of California. He should know the coast from Cape Mendocino to Point Loma; be neither northerner nor southerner, but a statewide Californian. Regional myopia is no disease for librarians. Our knowledge should expand in widening circles of interest, starting with the local and going clear to outer space.

Where do we acquire this knowledge? From books, from teachers, from living the life of a Californiac. Our library schools should do more to encourage this kind of lifelong learning; and I hope that the other schools, including that upstart one at UCLA,



## The Book Club of California

will follow the lead of this program that the Berkeley school and University Extension have pioneered.

In my *Southwestern Book Trails* I wrote a textbook for the course I teach in "Libraries and Literature of the Southwest." Now I hope to write *California Book Trails* for a course that I hereby volunteer to offer in statewide extension—after retirement from regular teaching.

This book of Smeaton Chase, the early novels and stories of Steinbeck, (*The Pastures of Heaven*, *To a God Unknown*, *The Long Valley*), the novels of Lillian Ross; a state geology publication called *Evolution of a Landscape*, which is California seen from the air; the guidebooks issued by Sunset-Lane; the guidebooks of Russ Leadabrand to the San Gabriel and San Bernardino mountains—these are good basic works which blend landscape and literature in varying degrees.

As fully alluring as the seacoast is the great valley of California, with a corresponding amount of literature about it. The first talk I ever gave to librarians about landscape and literature was in 1948 at Visalia, about the writers of the San Joaquin—Norris, Steinbeck, Saroyan, Everson. I read then as I shall read now William Everson's poem called "San Joaquin":

*"This valley after storms can be beautiful beyond the telling,  
Though our city-folk scorn it, cursing heat in the summer and drab-  
ness in winter,  
And flee it—Yosemite and the sea.  
They seek splendor: who would touch them must stunt them;  
The nerve that is dying needs thunder to rouse it.  
I in the vineyard, in green-time and dead-time, come to it dearly,  
And take nature neither freaked nor amazing,  
But the secret shining, the soft indeterminate wonder.  
I watch it morning and noon, the unutterable sundowns,  
And love as the leaf does the bough."*

The Great Valley is to be known and loved, all the long length of it from Redding and Red Bluff in the north, guarded by Lassen and Shasta, clear to the Weed Patch and the Grape-



## Quarterly News-Letter

vine and the southernmost wall of the Tehachapis. The northern Sacramento has no laureate such as William Everson is of the southern San Joaquin, and yet it is the more dramatic, if not the more beautiful end of the Valley, marked by Sutter's Buttes and the great natural monument of the Hooker Oak in Bidwell Park at Chico.

There are the little valleys, too, with their own literature: Steinbeck's Salinas, Stevenson's Napa, immortalized also by Idwal Jones in *The Vineyard*, by Francis Marion in *Valley People*, not to forget Jack London's Valley of the Moon. The literature of Death Valley calls for a separate lecture.

The Sierra Nevada has lent itself to a fusion of landscape and literature, and John Muir is its laureate. *The Mountains of California* stands with Dana, Smeaton Chase, and Mary Austin's desert book, *The Land of Little Rain*, as my favorite quartet on the twin themes of landscape and language.

John Muir is irresistibly alluring, as in the passage when he first viewed the Sierra Nevada from the crest of Pacheco Pass in the Coast Range:

*"... the Central Valley, but little trampled or plowed as yet, was one furred, rich sheet of golden compositae, and the luminous wall of the mountains shone in all its glory. Then it seemed to me the Sierra should be called not the Nevada, or Snowy Range, but the Range of Light ... the most divinely beautiful of all the mountain-chains I have ever seen."*

If you love the Sierra Nevada and John Muir, you will make room also for the Sierra Club's publications, many of them illustrated by Ansel Adams.

With the death of Jeffers, three years ago, his mantle fell on Kenneth Rexroth, who is today California's leading man of letters. His mountain poems are beautiful. They are of the Sierra Nevada, as well as of the Coast Ranges. Two elegies that he wrote in memory of his first wife, Andrée, are almost unbearably beautiful. The first, entitled *Mt. Tamalpais*, reads thus:

## The Book Club of California

*"The years have gone. It is spring  
Again. Mars and Saturn will  
Soon come on, low in the West,  
In the dusk. Now the evening  
Sunlight makes hazy girders  
Over Steep Ravine above  
The waterfalls. The winter  
Birds from Oregon, robins  
And varied thrushes, feast on  
Ripe toyon and madroña  
Berries. The robins sing as  
The dense light falls.*

*Your ashes*

*Were scattered in this place. Here  
I wrote you a farewell poem,  
And long ago another,  
A poem of peace and love,  
Of the lassitude of a long  
Spring evening in youth.  
Now it is almost ten years since  
You came here to stay. Once more,  
The pussy willows that come  
After the New Year in this  
Outlandish land are blooming.  
There are deer and raccoon tracks  
On the same places, a few  
New sand bars and cobble beds  
Have been left where erosion  
Has gnawed deep into the hills.  
The sounds of life are narrow.  
War and peace have passed like ghosts.  
The human race sinks toward  
Oblivion. A bittern*



## Quarterly News-Letter

*Calls from the same rushes where  
You heard one on our first year  
In the West; and where I heard  
One again in the year  
Of your death."*

I mentioned the Tehachapi Mountains, the east-west range which keeps out the barbarians—don't ask from which direction! There are numerous books about these mountains, but I know only one which blends landscape and literature. This is Mary Austin's *The Flock*, published in 1906 and never reprinted. She lived in the Tehachapis before she moved to the Inyo country, the setting of her better known *Land of Little Rain*.

The Coast Ranges, as well as the Tehachapis, do not lend themselves to dramatic writing. My favorite anthology of quiet writing about them is the one edited by Roderick Peattie called *The Pacific Coast Ranges*.

Although he does not say so in his preface, I suggested to Mr. Peattie three of his contributors: John Walton Caughey, Idwal Jones, and Judy van der Veer.

Miss Van der Veer has made the mountains of San Diego County her own literary preserve. All of her books are out of print and hard to find. They are *The River Pasture*, *Brown Hills*, *November Grass*, *A Few Happy Ones*, and *My Valley in the Sky*. She writes currently, however, for the *Christian Science Monitor* and the *San Diego Union*; and I trust these pieces will ultimately be gathered in book form.

No one has written with such delicate perception of the change of seasons in Southern California, or of the first rain.

"It is discouraging when fall seems to go on endlessly with no rain at all. Promises are made and broken. The sky will cloud, a wind will blow from the south, red-winged blackbirds will hold conventions—and the next day will be clear again.

"Always the rains come, though. It is only a matter of waiting. Beautiful dark clouds fill the sky, the south wind blows damply, the blackbirds go mad again—and the rain comes lightly, letting the hard earth receive it slowly. Time for a swift downpour later, after the earth is softened so the water won't run off.

## The Book Club of California

"You can hear the earth drinking. The dust-buried seeds move, and in a day the land is lifting with new green grass.

"This is the greatest of all things. After over half a year of drought, the hills return to life. There is no smell like the smell of that first rain. Wet dust, wet sagebrush, wet brown grass, wet air, wet hides of cattle, wet leaves. The birds sing into the rain, and tree toads and frogs lift up their voices."

Down in that same San Diego back country—Brush Country, Dr. Horace Parker calls it—as fully remote from Los Angeles as it is from San Francisco, lives a very old man, well into his 90s, who in the 1890s was a cataloger in the New York Public Library, following graduation from Harvard in the class of '93. Since 1910, George D. Curtis has been a rancher and a bee-keeper. In 1948 appeared his *Bees' Ways*, a book of essays on honey in the hills.

It recalls the closing chapter in Muir's *Mountains of California*, called "The Bee Pastures," which opens, "When California was wild, it was one sweet bee-garden throughout its entire length, north and south, and all the way across from the snowy Sierra to the ocean."

I like little books better than big books because I am a travelling reader, a reading traveller; and those beautiful Sierra Club folios on the high mountains just don't lend themselves to a mobile life.

J. Smeaton Chase's little *Cone-Bearing Trees of the California Mountains* is just as useful now as it was in 1911, when published by Houghton Mifflin. The photographs are by the author, and the line drawings by the artist Carl Eytel. Illustrated Californiana lends itself to collecting, but there is no bibliography to guide one.

Another handy traveller is Francis Fultz's book on the chaparral, with the evocative title *The Elfin Forest of California*, 1923. I wished the *Time* magazine writer had read it when, in reporting the recent brush fire in the Verdugo Hills, he wrote about the inflammable mesquite. If he can find me any mesquite growing in California outside of the Lower Sonoran desert, I'll eat it, twig by leaf.

The last great natural feature of California which has lent itself to literature is the desert. Here again we make a place for



## Quarterly News-Letter

J. Smeaton Chase. His *California Desert Trails* is as good as his *Coast Trails*.

Edwin Corle's *Fig Tree John* and Charles McNichol's *Crazy Weather* are my two favorite desert novels.

Mary Austin's *Land of Little Rain*, essays on the sagebrush desert of Inyo County, is the classic book which elevates this landscape to literature. The first edition with E. Boyd Smith's line drawings, the later edition with Ansel Adams' photographs, and the recent paperback in the Natural History Library, are the three essential editions.

Obvious by now should be my fondness for the byways and the backwaters. In spite of the population increase, there are still out of the way places in California. Three of them are still mostly as described in a book published as long ago as 1902. Charles F. Carter's *Some By-Ways of California* includes essays on Pala, Pescadero, and Jolon.

Within fifty miles of downtown Los Angeles, there are beautiful backwaters in the Temescals, the Santa Monicas, and the Sisquocs, where you can be alone with hawk, snake, condor, and the hum of bees. A few miles into the Santa Monicas from where we live on the Malibu coast, is a hidden place homesteaded in 1901 by two brothers, one of whom still lives on the land—a happy old recluse who hasn't been to Los Angeles since 1922.

The rising tide of people, however, will flush out these backwaters. They are doomed to destruction. In another century, California will be totally bulldozed and urbanized. Then these precious books of landscape and literature will be the race's only memory.

I mentioned cities, at once the shame and the glory of our civilization, and the way they feed on countryside. They also feed literature. Writers are nourished by the vitality generated in urban centers. This is why there are more and better novels about Los Angeles than about San Francisco. Love alone, the kind of loving affection everyone has for San Francisco, does not produce literature, nor does loathing. The emotion must be ambivalent. Joyce's for Dublin, for example, that blend of love and loathing, heightened by exile, which produced *Ulysses*.

Thus Los Angeles waits her Joyce, San Francisco her Stendhal, California her Dickens. Such a one might be at work tonight, a

## The Book Club of California

solitary, spinning furiously in the silence of his cocoon, on Russian Hill or Bunker Hill, or no hill, self-confident and secure at the calm heart of the whirlwind. I would hazard only one prediction about him: he will not be an academic man.

Of all the good novels about Los Angeles—*Merton of the Movies*, *Angels Flight*, *A Place in the Sun*, *The Loved One*—the best are the four classic murder mysteries by Raymond Chandler: *The Big Sleep*, *Farewell My Lovely*, *The High Window*, *The Lady in the Lake*. In them, written in the incredibly short span of four and a half years, Chandler fixed forever the landscape, the people, the flora and fauna of Southern California in the 1920s. He is the Angel City's laureate. San Francisco and the Bay Region await theirs. Frank Norris, Oscar Lewis, and Clarkson Crane come the closest. If Saroyan had stayed, he might have fulfilled the promise of *The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze*, published just thirty years ago.

I could speak of friendship with western writers as another great lure of Californiana. Friendship with the late Edwin Corle, with Idwal Jones, Oscar Lewis, Robinson Jeffers, Judy Van der Veer, William Everson—all have enriched my life as a reader, a writer, a librarian, a man. Or with historians and bibliographers, with Cowan, Wagner, Layne, and Hodge; with Bolton, Wheat, Caughey, and Farquhar.

What I wish to end with, however, is the lure of the books themselves, singly and en masse, in bookshops and libraries throughout the west, throughout the world. The magnetic field.

I have found Californiana in Edinburgh, London, Paris, and of course New York and Chicago. In wintry Chicago, a block or two from the Newberry Library, I have taken sanctuary from the bitter weather in the apartment shop of Wright Howes, that charming old scholarly gentleman who is now the dean of Americanists. While his Siamese cats raced up and down the high window curtains and his wife Zoe mixed drinks, I have combed Wright Howes' stock for Southern Californiana—and found it. Once an immaculate presentation copy of *Reminiscences of a Ranger*, given by the author, Major Horace Bell, to General Phineas Banning, the creator of the port of Los Angeles. This was the first hard bound book printed in Los Angeles, in the year 1881.



## Quarterly News-Letter

The lure is in the land itself, in the varied landscapes of California, its seacoast, valleys, mountains, and deserts; and in the cities where libraries, bookstores, and people are to be found in all the rich and magnetic abundance which man is heaping up in California.

### HOW PRINTING CAME *to the* ASTOR SCHOOL

By JOHN AYLING\*

MANY English moms, long conditioned to dealing with the ink-stained fingers of schoolboy sons, are now looking for new detergents to deal with printers ink! There has been a healthy growth of school presses in the last ten years, and some of them have been remarkably successful. Starting life as an activity for children whose skill in other artistic activities was limited, school printing has in many cases gone far beyond its early ambitions. Original publications have made their mark in commercial situations, and at least two school presses have been articleed in national newspapers.

Our Press at Astor School in Dover is typical. In 1956 some very dilapidated amateur equipment was given to the school. Its condition frustrated all the efforts that were made to produce reasonable work from it, but it sowed the idea which has flowered in our Astor Press.

I had been appointed to the School as an Art and Craft teacher. My knowledge of printing was almost nonexistent, but two good friends in the trade were enthusiastic about our project, and willing to discipline my clumsy attempts at typesetting and presswork! Concurrently Ken Beal, my headmaster, kept the pot boiling with his indulgent interest in all practical aspects of education, and a picture of the sort of press we wanted emerged.

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\* Mr. Ayling, the author of this entertaining account of the evolution of a student-operated press, is a teacher of arts and crafts at the Astor School in Dover, England.

## The Book Club of California

We tried to obtain an Albion, a flat-bed machine very similar to the American Columbian. None had been made since 1890, and we learned that the very few models that came on to the market soon found their way into the Art Schools where they were in demand for block printing.

Through trade journals and circulars we searched the South of England. One we missed by an hour after a fifty-mile journey. And then, just as hope was dying, we ran one to earth in Essex, about a hundred miles away. We had no official power to purchase, and I chased off to Essex with Ken Beal's exhortations to make a very shrewd deal, since we were spending from the School Voluntary Fund, ringing in my ears. Everything went beautifully. The machine turned out to be in lovely condition, and the obvious case of love at first sight that the old Cockney dealer witnessed between me and that machine must have melted his heart. He gave us a discount.

Two weeks later the machine was installed, all eight hundred-weight of it. It was an exciting day and the faces of the children who watched us erect the strange looking machine were unforgettable.

We bought some Bembo types and introduced a small group of lads to typesetting. The Press's first offering was a program for Open Day. I blush now to think of the pride with which I joined the lads in offering to the parents that crude impression of ill-set, unjustified lines. If there were any professionals at that Open Day they were models of charity and forbearance! But our standards improved and soon we had a busy program, printing a termly magazine, and with responsibility for all the printed ephemera of the school.

A Folio Treadle "Arab" came our way, and our output speeded up. We use it now for all letterpress work, using the Albion for blocks and lino-cuts. Our range of types is still founded on Bembo for all texts, but we have collected an unusually large resource of titles for a school press, and our young typographers are able to experiment to their hearts' content. We have also introduced silk screen printing as a useful adjunct to our other work, and I think we can claim that our Press, now in its eighth year, is modestly comprehensive in its scope.

Several boys have gone on to work in the Industry. They come



## Quarterly News-Letter

back to see us, and offer advice. Perhaps the contrast between the inky chaos that is developed by our beginners and the fine technology of their livelihood amuses them. Perhaps. But I think ours is more fun.

### *Elected to Membership*

The following have been elected since the publication of the Summer *News-Letter*.

<i>Member</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>
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### *New Sustaining Member*

The two classifications of membership above Regular Memberships are Patron Memberships, \$100 a year, and Sustaining Memberships, \$25 a year. The following has changed from Regular to Sustaining Member:

DR. R. S. SPECK                      Daly City

### *Notes on Publications*

AS THIS ISSUE of the *Quarterly* goes to press, the Spring publication, Fremont's *Geographical Memoir Upon Upper California*, has almost sold out, and it seems unlikely that orders for second copies can be filled.

The Fall publication, Carrie LeConte's journal, should prove a fitting commemoration of the Yosemite centennial. Fourteen-year-old Carrie kept a high-spirited account of her trip to Yosemite in the Summer of 1878, in a party led by her father, the noted geologist and U.C. professor Joseph Le Conte.

# The Book Club of California

Now published for the first time, Carrie's journal depicts in words and pictures the natural wonders of that area as they then existed in a near-pristine state, several days' journey from the Bay Area. (It also reveals some of the hardships incidental to camping out in the era before air mattresses, flashlights and instant coffee—when girl mountain-climbers were expected to wear ankle-length skirts!)

Susanna B. Dakin, author of *The Scotch Paisano*, *The Lives of William Hartnell*, etc., has edited the journal and contributed a biographical introduction to the beautiful, brilliant, yet enigmatic Carrie LeConte. The book will be designed and printed in an edition of 450 by Mallette Dean. It will include many of Carrie's pen-and-ink sketches and reproductions of several illustrated pages from the original, as well as a portrait of Carrie. The price will be \$18.75 (plus 4% sales tax to California residents).

## Exhibition Notes

IN HONOR of the seventh joint meeting of the Roxburghe and Zamorano Clubs—to be held at San Francisco September 26 and 27—the Book Club will display throughout September an exhibit of keepsakes produced for previous joint meetings. Many of California's finest printers will be represented in the show. This exhibit will be followed in October by one devoted to Yosemite, in honor of the Fall publication.

## Serendipity

WE HAVE COME to expect certain characteristics of deans, whether they be deans of the Established Church or the School of Library Service at U.C.L.A. In the past we have had gloomy deans (Inge), satirical deans (Swift) and (stretching our deans beyond the scope of this review) a "Dizzy" one; the characteristic that comes to mind when reading the books of Dean Lawrence Clark Powell is "genial."

*The Little Package*, the latest collection of essays about books and bookmen by Powell, exemplifies this. Whatever the author is discussing—his beloved Southwest or the perhaps slightly less beloved Dr. Rosenbach—he does so with a warm and cheerful enthusiasm. He writes always with conviction, and if he is prejudiced at times (and who but a blockhead isn't?) he is never spiteful. Indeed, there is about these essays an old-fashioned air which precludes the modern tendency to be smart and unkind at the expense of truth. And very refreshing it is, too.

In *The Little Package* will be found articles for all tastes—especially bookish tastes: libraries and librarians, book collectors, booksellers, writers, music, travel . . . Members of The Book Club of California will be especially grateful to learn that herein will be found Dean Powell's address, "The Prospect Before Us," given at the dinner to celebrate the Club's fiftieth anniversary.

## Quarterly News-Letter

The essay, the bookish article, is a difficult product to market these days, and the publisher of *The Little Package* is to be congratulated on his perspicacity, his faith and his courage. Dean Powell's book deserves a larger audience than it probably will get. It seems a pity geniality is so woefully out of style.

D. M.



MEMBERS OF THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA will see more exhibits than at any previous Antiquarian Book Fair in the United States when the Fourth California International event of its kind opens October 15 at the Sheraton-Palace Hotel in San Francisco. Exhibitors from Northern and Southern California, from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts and London, England, will display and offer for sale almost a million dollars' worth of rare books, maps, prints, autographs, manuscripts—everything of interest to the bibliophile.

The Fair, which is under the auspices of the Northern California Chapter of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America, will run for three days. On the first two days, Thursday and Friday, October 15 and 16, the hours will be from noon to 9 p.m. On the third day, Saturday, October 17, the Fair will open at 10 a.m. and close promptly at 5 p.m.

The grand ballroom has been chosen as the site of the Fair. Admission will, of course, be free and there will be ample room, light and air.



THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF GRAPHIC ARTS TEXTBOOK Show—consisting of recent textbooks chosen as outstanding in terms of design and production—will be shown in San Francisco during the last week in September and the first week in October. It is being shown under the auspices of the Western Book Publishers Association, an informal organization formed a year ago by people working in book publishing in the Bay Area. The show will be exhibited (no charge) at the Academy of Art, 604 Sutter Street. It will be open all day during the week, as well as most evenings and Saturdays. Check with the Academy of Art for exact dates and hours.



AS THE SIXTH in a series of handmade folios, The Allen Press of Kentfield will issue in October *The Mirrour of the World*, translated from the French by William Caxton, and printed by him in 1481. The work is of great importance to the English-speaking world as the first English printed book to have illustrations, and also the first to present a summation of knowledge at the end of the



## The Book Club of California

Middle Ages. Included in the text are dissertations on geography, astronomy, theology, strange peoples and animals of the world, and many esoteric marvels. The Allens, as is their custom, are producing this book entirely by hand: handset types, and handmade paper which they are printing damp on their large Acorn-Smith handpress. The paper was made especially for this press by the Richard de Bas mill in France, and contains the watermark of the press. There will be 33 illustrations reproducing the woodcuts of the original volume, and every page will have two-color decorations drawn by Mallette Dean and based on border devices used by Caxton. Each of the three sections of the book opens with a full-page, hand-colored initial of the period; each of the three sections is contained in a Fabriano paper wrapper; and the 150 pages, 15 by 10 inches, unsewn in the French manner, are enclosed in an elaborate hinged box covered in cloth imported from Paris. The edition is limited to 130 copies. The price will be about \$45.00.



FOR THE SACRAMENTO BOOK COLLECTORS CLUB, Roger Levenson of The Tamalpais Press in Berkeley has produced an unusually attractive 28-page pamphlet, *A Few Favorite California Books* by Allan R. Ottley, the Senior Librarian in the California Section of the State Library. His lengthy essay—provocative and stimulating—will be sought for avidly by Californiana collectors.



THE AUERHAHN PRESS of San Francisco has just completed the first in a series of ten broadsides, each having for the text an original poem which is handset and printed on dampened handmade paper. Published by Oyez of Berkeley, number one is a handsome piece: *Two for Bruce Conner* by Michael McClure. Forthcoming broadsides, all limited to 350 copies, will include verse by Brother Antoninus, Creeley, Duncan, Levertov, Meltzer, Miles, Olson, and Patchen. The price is \$1.50 each.



FROM ENGLAND, the Club's library has just received volume one (1964) of *Alphabet, International Annual of Letterforms*. This imposing, profusely illustrated book of over 150 pages was edited by R. S. Hutchings, and published by James Moran, Ltd., for The Kynoch Press. In the introduction we are told that "this is the initial volume of the first publishing enterprise of its kind to be devoted to the entire field of letterforms: the design, production and use of alphabets of every kind in all media, materials and applications. . . . World literacy advances—in extent and sophistication—as never before; scholarship adds increasingly to our knowledge of the past; new media and techniques influence

## Quarterly News-Letter

the forms and habits of traditional characters; and the relentless pace of fashion and competition challenges the creative ingenuity of designers. The A B C—or its equivalent in other alphabets—is the common heritage of the literate. . . .” This first volume presents illustrated articles by thirteen specialists covering Trajan capitals, chancery italics, computer characters, neon signs, architectural lettering, television typography, etc. (42s.)



ALSO OF GREAT INTEREST to both Californiana collectors and those concerned with well-designed and carefully printed books is *The Letters of a Young Miner*, recently published by John Howell—Books, of San Francisco. The text is unique: a brilliant youth still in his teens reporting his view of rushing for gold. Jasper S. Hill, from Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, journeyed overland to California by ox-team early in 1849. His intelligence, exuberance, and adventurous nature are reflected in his overland letters and in his accounts of life in the mining camps from 1849 to 1852. The book runs to 124 pages in length and includes an introduction by Doyce B. Nunis, Jr., plus photographs and a map of the gold region where Jasper lived. The edition, limited to 475 copies, is from the press of Barbara Holman in San Francisco. The price is \$15.00.

### *Book Club Publications still available*

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <i>The Estiennes</i> , by Mark Pattison. Three original leaves.<br>Grabhorn Press, 1949.                        | \$15.00 * |
| <i>Mother of Felipe and Other Early Stories</i> , by Mary Austin.<br>Ward Ritchie Press, 1950.                  | \$5.75 *  |
| <i>George Clymer and the Columbian Press</i> , by Jacob Kainen.<br>Taylor & Taylor, 1950.                       | \$5.00 *  |
| <i>Typographic Design in Relation to Photographic Composition</i> , by Stanley Morison. Black Vine Press, 1959. | \$9.00 *  |
| <i>RLS to J. M. Barrie: A Vailima Portrait</i> , by Robert Louis Stevenson.<br>Grabhorn Press, 1962.            | \$12.50 * |

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